



# Department of Justice

United States Attorney Gregory G. Lockhart  
Southern District of Ohio

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, July 14, 2006

<http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/ohs>

CONTACT: Fred Alverson

614-469-5715

FAX: 614-469-5503

## **COLUMBUS BUSINESSMAN PLEADS GUILTY TO TRYING TO BRIBE IRS AGENT**

### *Offered \$5,000 in cash and designer purse in exchange for favorable audit*

COLUMBUS – A Columbus businessman pled guilty in United States District Court here to attempting to bribe the Internal Revenue Service agent assigned to audit his corporate and personal income tax returns. Ming Liou, age 50, and owner of Beta Electronics entered the guilty plea yesterday.

Gregory G. Lockhart, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Ohio, and Peter McConney, Special Agent in Charge, U.S. Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration (TIGTA), Chicago Field Office, announced the plea entered before Senior United States District Judge James L. Graham.

The IRS agent assigned to audit Liou's personal and corporate tax returns first met with him at his home on July 11, 2005 to discuss the audit. Liou operates the business out of his home. Liou offered the agent a designer purse as a "gift" that he valued at \$400. He also told the agent that an accountant wanted \$5,000 to represent him during the IRS audit. Liou said he would rather give the agent the cash if she agreed to expedite the tax audit and "not be hard on him." The agent told TIGTA investigators about the offer.

During an electronically monitored meeting between Liou and the agent on July 26, 2005, Liou paid the agent \$5,000 in cash and asked that she "wrap up" the audit with results favorable to him. Liou cautioned her not to deposit the money in the bank and also gave the agent the purse.

"People who think about cheating on their taxes should realize two things," Lockhart said. "One is that they will face even harsher penalties than would just by paying their taxes. Two is that they are unfairly increasing the tax burden for all honest Americans."

Judge Graham will determine the sentence and set a date for sentencing. The law provides for a maximum punishment of two years imprisonment, a \$250,000 fine and three years of supervised release for his crime although actual sentences are usually less than the maximum provided by law. If the audit shows that he owes additional taxes, he will have to pay that plus interest and penalties.

Lockhart commended the TIGTA agents who investigated the case and Assistant U.S. Attorney Doug Squires who is prosecuting the case.

###